Hundred-year-old schoolhouse to

When members of the Thematic Committee of the Mishicot Area Growth and Improvement Committee (MAGIC) established their goals in 1985, they knew they wanted to establish a museum. They also knew that they wanted to house it in the 100-plus-year-old former schoolhouse which was being used for storage by the Village of Mishicot.

Their dreams recently became a reality when Village president George Krause turned the keys of the building over to George Schmidt, chairman of the Thematic Committee.

Construction of the building which would some day be proposed as a village museum was authorized in 1873 when electors at a special school meeting voted 18 to 16 to replace an 1845 schoolhouse which stood on a site on cemetery hill, just north of the gristmill (now Valders Elevator Co-op).

The original site of the 'new' schoolhouse was later occupied by a two-story brick school building, now the 'Old School.' The electors also voted to raise $500 by direct taxation and to borrow an additional $500 at 7 percent interest for a period of four years, to cover the cost of the two-room frame building.

Plans for the 56x36-foot structure were drawn by John Mayer of Manitowoc, and bids were advertised in the Manitowoc 'Pilot' newspaper. F. Quisdorf was low bidder; much of the work of painting and decorating was done by volunteer helpers.

The bell hung in the schoolhouse tower had its own unique and somewhat shadowy history. Some say it was brought to Mishicot by Daniel Smith from his former home in New York, supposedly salvaged from an engine involved in a train wreck.

A tale with a little more 'glamour' tells us that the bell was actually taken from a train engine parked in Two Rivers. One quiet evening, a number of young men reportedly went into Two Rivers and 'borrowed' the bell. This, they said, would save money and would be their contribution to the new schoolhouse. Names are never mentioned when the story is told, but old timers will tell you that, IF the story is true, they have their own ideas concerning the identity of the culprits.

This schoolhouse served the Mishicot school district for 32 years until 1905, when by a vote of 50 to 28 electors decided to construct a two-story brick schoolhouse. This 1905 building with its 1920 addition is now the 'Old School.'

The old schoolhouse was moved to a plot across the road and east of its original location, and became the Mishicot Town Hall. When the Village of Mishicot was incorporated, it became the Village Hall, then was 'demoted' to the role of storage building when operations of the Village were moved to their present location in a former bank building.

The immediate plans of MAGIC's Thematic Committee call for the restoration of the building to its original condition, including replacement of the bell tower, which had been removed. The committee is seeking the assistance of volunteers in the restoration.

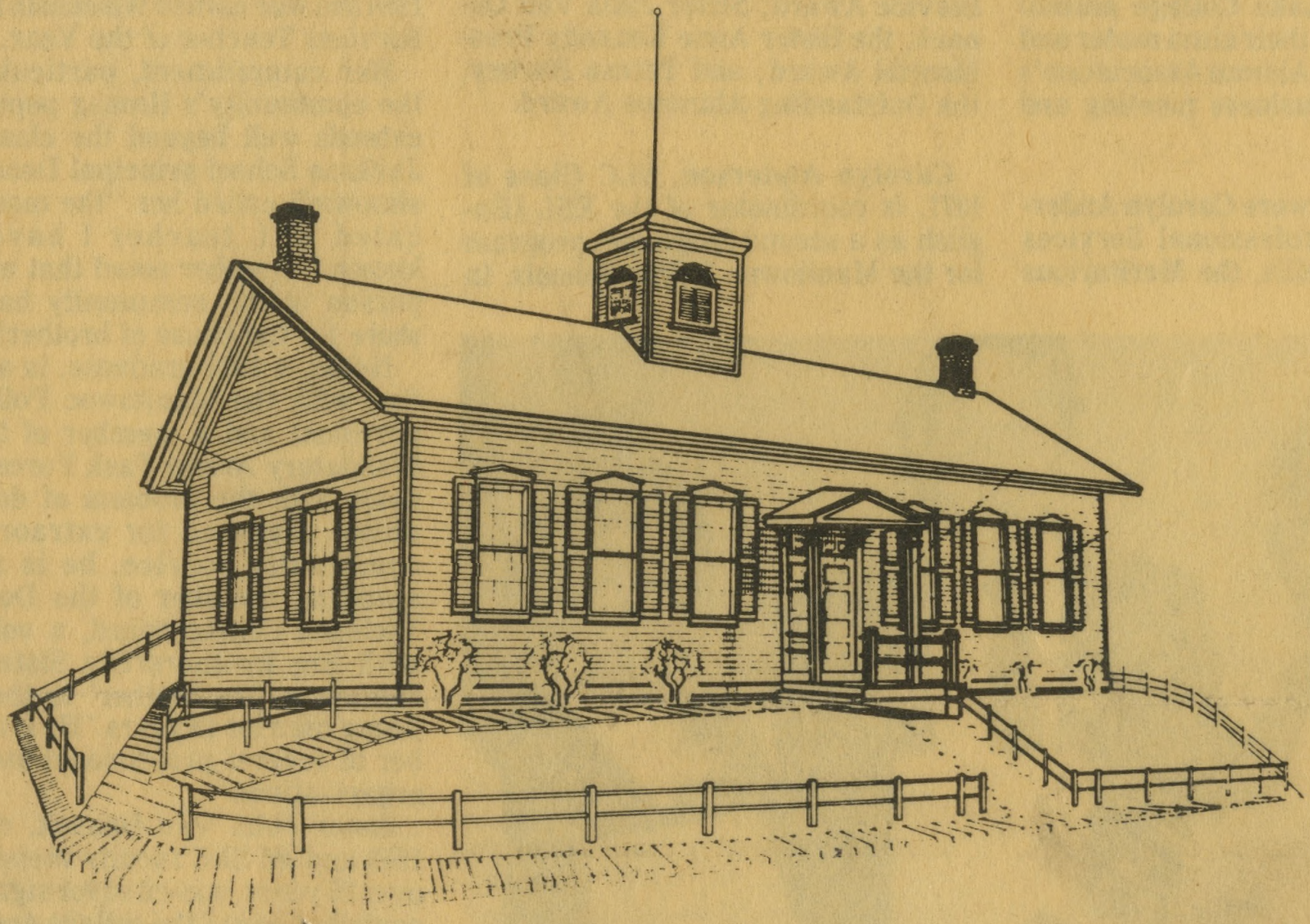
Work sessions are scheduled for every Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to noon, and every Monday, 1 to 4 p.m. until the end of June, except the Saturday and Monday of Memorial Day weekend.

Persons interested in helping with the restoration is asked to contact Delmar Dvorak, 755-2076.

No date has yet been established for opening of the Mishicot Museum, which will feature both permanent and special displays. Persons interested in donating or loaning items to the museum can call George Schmidt.

Other members of the Thematic Committee include Lila Dvorak, Grace Schleis, Harry and Lucille Raisleger, Robert and Florence Scheuer, Christ Baugniet, Hazel Eisenmann, Dora Kadow, Gale Kronforst and Hallie Wendorff.

become Mishicot Museum



Above, an artist's rendering of the Mishicot Museum. At left, a former two-room schoolhouse built in 1873 and currently a village warehouse, will become the museum.